

that public money should be wantonly and uselessly expended, demands the investigation and scrutiny of a Hume or a Williams.

If any of your readers can give me and the public any account of the origin and history of the work referred to, they will render useful service. The title-page is as follows:—"The Architectural Antiquities of the Collegiate Chapel of St. Stephen, Westminster, the late House of Commons: drawn from actual Survey and Admeasurements made by direction of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods and Works, &c., accompanied by Observations on the original and perfect state of the Building, and a Description of the Plates. By Frederick Mackenzie. London: Weale, 1844." Large folio (size of page, 31 inches by 26), 42 pp., 19 plates.—I am, Sir, &c.

A LOVER OF ARCHITECTURE.

#### ST. JAMES'S CHURCH.

MR. BUILDER.—I want to see the exterior of Sir Christopher Wren's church brightened up, to remove its present dingy appearance, which will be much increased by the new rectory now in course of building. The parish might surely improve the appearance of the brickwork, and do good by cleaning the stone stringings and dressings, adding others, and, by surmounting the walls with a stone balustrade, which would add much to its effect, and would also be in keeping with the square tower. Poor old Westminster Bridge might, perhaps, furnish these stone balustrades at a cheap rate. Would not the people be much better for a coat or two of paint, seeing that all the other parts of the building have received their good looks from the painter.—I am, Sir, &c.

London, Nov. 22, 1846. COS. WEN.

#### IMPROVEMENT OF TAUNTON.

SIR.—As you have occasionally mentioned the attempts that have been made to "improve the town of Taunton," I beg to inform you what efforts have been exerted to attain that object, and how they have miserably and unfortunately failed,—for the present, at least. The scheme adopted was comprehensive in the highest degree, and worthy of a better fate.

A commission was to be appointed, and empowered by Act of Parliament to carry it out, and rates levied to defray the expenses. Some of the requisite notices had actually been given, in order to apply to Parliament next session, for an "Act" to carry out the plan, when, strange to say, the promoters of the scheme quarrelled, and at a meeting last week, a motion was carried to abandon the proposal altogether.

Such a course seems both absurd and unjustifiable.—I am, Sir, &c.

A LOOKER-ON.

London, Nov. 23rd, 1846.

"ATHLETIZING" OF THE WORKING CLASSES.—We use this novel expression to point out the difference between mere exercise, hitherto recommended to our youth, and the consequential and systematic development of the whole physical frame, which are two different things, indeed. The truth thereof begins so much to be appreciated on the continent, that the government of Hesse Darmstadt have issued an especial regulation thereon. It states—that henceforth the athletic schools (*Turn-schulen*) already existing at all educational establishments, have to enter into the category of ordinary training, and take their rank as one of the legally prescribed branches of youth's tuition. Moreover this, in several places on the Rhine, the male youth have united themselves into athletic societies, with a detailed set of rules and regulations. Some of them also take a pledge, "to grow themselves up to proud and manly vigour." It may be interesting to observe, that when Dr. Jahn first established these public play and athletic grounds in Prussia, he was indicted for high treason, and put into a fortress!

SUPPLY OF WATER TO LONDON.—An application is to be made to Parliament in the ensuing session, for an Act for better supplying the metropolis with water, from the river Thames, at Taplow, in Buckinghamshire, by means of reservoirs, aqueducts, pipes, &c., to terminate near the Swiss Cottage, at Hampstead.

#### TENDER.

TENDERS delivered on the 13th inst., for erecting three houses at Liverpool; Mr. J. G. Austin, architect. The quantities were furnished:—

Furness and Kilpin.....	£3,275
Jones .....	3,194
Wittar.....	2,956
Mackerell .....	2,912
Lender .....	2,797

All Liverpool builders. The lowest tender accepted.

#### Miscellaneous.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, DENHOLME GATE.—On Friday the 20th, the Bishop of Ripon consecrated this fabric. The church consists of nave, side aisles, and chancel, and is open internally from end to end, there being no rood screen at the chancel arch, and the base of the spire being filled with a gallery, which also projects one arch into the nave, and is the only gallery in the church. The aisles are separated from the nave by seven arches, on clustered pillars, above which there is a clerestory, with double lights above the apex of each arch, the groining of the roof springing from the spaces between. The seats are all low backed, having poppy heads at the ends nearest the middle aisle. The reading-desk and pulpit are placed at each side of the chancel arch, and the chancel, which is raised from the nave by three steps, is paved in diamonds, black and white. The east window, of stained glass, is a triple lancet, the two side lights containing each two passages, and the centre light three, illustrative of the life of St. Paul, the patron saint. The church was designed by Mr. Chantrell, of Leeds, and contains upwards of 600 seats.

PEDIMENTAL SCULPTURE OF ST. GEORGE'S HALL, LIVERPOOL.—Two of the Liverpool artists, Mr. Spence and Mr. Macbride, are vehemently protesting against the refusal of the town-council to "allow them to send in designs or models of sculpture entirely at their own cost;" the council having refused on the ground of its being "too late to think of the matter." Reverting to the procurement of the designs themselves, they then appeal to their "townsmen generally, every professed man of taste, every merchant, trader, shop-keeper, and all,"—against the "entire disregard of competition," as not "the fair way of appropriating the funds of the town." But in this, exclusive of "the encouragement of art," they suppress the fact, that the town-council, in accepting Professor Cockerell's designs, were not "appropriating the funds of the town" at all; but, on the contrary, were saving those very funds which would have been expended in a competition for designs. Irrespective altogether of the general merits of this particular case, this is not exactly as it ought to be, especially where profession is being made of "explaining to the townsmen the whole matter, from first to last, and in a simple way."

THE DESTRUCTION OF BUILDINGS AT GRAVESEND—again urges into notice the necessity for the adoption of stringent measures for the more effectual protection of buildings against fire. In the present instance, we may observe, the party-walls were in various cases plainly dilapidated. It is a humiliating fact, too, as regards human foresight, and capability of benefiting by dire experience, that the principal portion of the houses that were erected on the site of the former fire in West-street are again consumed. It is some consolation to know, however (if, indeed, it comes to anything after all), that "a meeting of the corporation was held on Wednesday last, to devise measures for the future protection of the borough against the occurrence of similar calamities." It is time to shut the stable securely now that the steed has been twice stolen out of it. The amount of loss by the late fire is estimated at 100,000*l*. Another has even since occurred at Gravesend, and one at Southampton.

INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS.—At an ordinary meeting of the Institute, held on the 16th inst., a paper was read by Mr. C. Newton, of the British Museum, on the art of the marbles from Halicarnassus, and their connection with the celebrated sepulchre of Mausolus. We shall give it in full.

DECORATION OF THE CHAMBERS OF THE FRENCH PRESS.—We learn from the *Morning Herald*, that M. Eugène Delacroix has just finished the paintings in the grand library of the Chamber of Peers, and that the scaffolding is removed. The subject of the composition is the introduction of Dante by Virgil to the heroes and sages of Paganism, in the "Divina Commedia." It is not a mural fresco, but a painting in oil, on pieces of canvas, which are afterwards joined to each other, and affixed to the wall. This great work is composed of four groups, united by episodic personages. The first is that of the poets. Homer, leaning on the sceptre of the pastor kings of the Iliad, presides at this solemn presentation. Behind him are Horace, Lucan, and Ovid, who show great eagerness to get a sight of Dante. The group of illustrious Greeks crowds upon the left of the poets. Alexander, Aristotle, Apelles, Socrates, and Alcibiades, are prominent; and the capital figure of the group is Aspasia, who stands erect, with her head gracefully inclined towards her shoulder, and her person enveloped in drapery of great elegance. The group of Romans, composed of Cincinnatus, Cato, and Marcus Aurelius, is opposite the last, and is equally fine.

OPERATIVE HOUSE-PAINTERS' ASSOCIATION.—Endeavours are being made to associate the operative house-painters for mutual instruction and protection. There are several points in the address, which has been sent to us, that have our cordial support (the importance of establishing a library, acquiring information, increasing self-respect, and obtaining a place to meet in "*away from public-houses*"); but we must see the objects and plan of proceedings more clearly defined, before we say more. The last-named point is of vital importance: thousands are ruined through benefit clubs, and other associations for the operative, being held at public-houses.

DESTRUCTION OF WEEDS IN PAVED YARDS AND COURTS.—The growth of weeds between the stones of a pavement is often very injurious as well as unsightly. The following method of destroying them is adopted at the Mint at Paris and elsewhere, with good effect:—One hundred pounds of water, twenty pounds of quicklime, and two pounds of flour of sulphur, are to be boiled in an iron vessel. The liquor is to be allowed to settle, the clear part drawn off, and being more or less diluted, according to circumstances, is to be used for watering the alleys and pavements. The weeds will not re-appear for several years.

MENIEVAL ARCHITECTS.—According to the *Moniteur des Arts*, an accident has led to the discovery of the name, hitherto unknown, of the architect by whom the magnificent Hôtel de Ville of Louvain was erected. "He was, it seems, a certain Mathieu de Layens; a master mason of the town, who for nearly thirty years had handled the trowel for the magistrates, at the rate of four sous per day in summer, and less than three in the winter time." Such of our readers as have visited Louvain, will remember that the ancient drawing of the west front of the cathedral is preserved in the Town-hall. It is executed on vellum, 9 feet high, and 2 feet 9 inches wide.

FATHER MATHEW'S TOWER AT MOUNT-PATRICK.—A lofty double tower erected at Mountpatrick, by Mr. W. O'Connor, in commemoration of the reception of Father Mathew by the Londoners, in 1843, was opened publicly on the 9th inst. It is 100 feet high, and the principal apartment in it is 16 feet in diameter. The style adopted is Gothic, and the cost must have been considerable. Judging from two views of it, however, in the *Illustrated London News*, we cannot say much for the art in it. Besides a bust of the reverend gentleman, by Hogan, there is a stone statue of him on a pedestal of rock-work, at a short distance from the tower.

FALL OF PARTY-WALL IN RATHBONE-PLACE.—Statements have been made to us to the effect, that want of care and right directions led to the slip of the party-wall in Rathbone-place. The matter is now before the referees, and we therefore withhold any remarks upon it.

BREAKWATER AT BRIGHTON.—The Chain Pier Company are about to construct a fixed breakwater at the south end of the pier, to facilitate the embarking and disembarking of passengers. It is designed by Sir Samuel Brown.